hee seekes my life, his reason well *I* know;
I oft deliuerd from his forfeytures
many that haue at times made mone to me,
therefore he hates me.

*Sal.* I am sure the Duke will neuer grant
this forfaiture to hold.

*An.* The Duke cannot denie the course of law:
for the commoditie that strangers haue
vvith vs in Venice, if it be denyed,
will much impeach the iustice of the state,
since that the trade and profit of the citty
consisteth of all Nations. Therefore goe,
these griefes and losses haue so bated me
that *I* shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
to morrow, to my bloody Creditor.
Well *Iaylor* on, pray God *Bassanio* come
to see me pay his debt, and then *I* care not. *Exeunt.*

Enter *Portia, Nerrissa, Lorenzo, Iessica,* and a man of *Portias.*

*Lor.* Maddam, although I speake it in your presence,
you haue a noble and a true conceite
of god-like amitie, which appeares most strongly
in bearing thus the absence of your Lord.
But if you knew to whom you show this honour,
how true a gentleman you send releefe,
how deere a louer of my Lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the worke
then customarie bountie can enforce you.

*Por.* I neuer did repent for dooing good,
nor shall not now: for in companions
that doe conuerse and wast the time together,
vvhose soules doe beare an egall yoke of loue,
there must be needes a like proportion
of lyniaments, of manners, and of spirit;
vvhich makes me thinke that this *Anthonio*
beeing the bosome louer of my Lord,
must needes be like my Lord. If it be so,

how



How little is the cost I haue bestowed
in purchasing the semblance of my soule;
From out the state of hellish cruelty,
This comes too neere the praising of my selfe,
Therefore no more of it: heere other things
*Lorenso* I commit into your hands,
The husbandry and mannage of my house,
Vntill my Lords returne: for mine owne part
I haue toward heauen breath'd a secret vowe,
To liue in prayer and contemplation,
Onely attended by *Nerrissa* heere,
Vntill her husband and my Lords returne,
There is a Monastry two miles off,
And there we will abide. I doe desire you
not to denie this imposition,
the which my loue and some necessity
now layes vpon you.

*Lorens.* Madame, with all my hart,
I shall obey you in all faire commaunds.

*Por.* My people doe already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and *Iessica*
in place of Lord *Bassanio* and my selfe.
So far you well till we shall meete againe.

*Lor.* Faire thoughts and happy houres attend on you.

*Iessi.* *I* wish your Ladiship all harts content.

*Por.* I thank you for your wish, and am well pleasd
to wish it back on you: far you well *Iessica.* *Exeunt.*
Now *Balthaser*, as I haue euer found thee honest true,
So let me find thee still: take this same letter,
and vse thou all th'indeuour of a man,
In speede to Mantua. see thou render this
into my cosin hands Doctor *Belario*,
And looke what notes and garments he doth giue thee,
bring them *I* pray thee with imagin'd speede
vnto the Traiect, to the common Ferrie
vvhich trades to Venice; vvast no time in words
but get thee gone, I shall be there before thee.



*Baltha.*